

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION  
FACULTY OF COMMERCE  
DEPARTMENT OF BANKING AND FINANCE**



**RESEARCH PROJECT**

**IMPACT OF DEVOLUTION FUNDS ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN LOCAL  
AUTHORITIES. CASE STUDY MUTARE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL (2019-  
2022).**

**BY**

**REG NUMBER B193432B**

**A DESSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
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## **DEDICATION**

If I have seen further than others, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of the giants I am grateful to my giants for supporting me since I have aspirations that need to come true. To my mother and father. You instilled discipline, passion and thirst for knowledge, through your famous bible quote “my people are perishing for lack of knowledge” and other regular bible quotes. You inspired me greatly through your love and passion for education which up to-date is very much alive. For their continuous support want to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, siblings and extended relatives’ also need to express my sincere gratitude to my cousin brothers and their families. The continuous support I received from supervisor, should not be overlooked. Without a question agree that my academic endeavours would not been as successful without their ongoing, unwavering, and visionary support and advice. I will forever be indebted to them. Above allele thank Almighty God, the creator and perfecter of our knowledge, wisdom, and faith, for His love, grace, mercy, kindness and for supporting me through the academic. Dedicated this research to Him.

## **ABSTRACT**

The study was an analysis of impact devolution funds in local authorities on service delivery in Zimbabwe rural communities using Mutare Rural District Council as case study. It looks at the patterns of council service delivery and local citizen's access to these services being financed by devolution funds. The study hypothesises that there is significant relationship between devolution funds and service delivery. The study argues that devolution funds in rural local authorities affects service delivery in rural district councils. The major research objectives of the study were to determine the influence of devolution funds on service delivery; to explore the key success factors which affect implementation of devolution funds; and to establish challenges in use of devolution funds. Research methods involved both theoretical review and empirical study based on the case study, qualitative and exploratory approaches. On design, data and methodology, the study adopted descriptive research design on a sample size of 40 participants with the questionnaire and the interview as the main data collection instruments. As interview guides, observations, secondary data and primary data were the data collection tools involved in the study, various simple random sampling methods were used in order to get responses from various individuals. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 were used to analyse data which was then presented using tables. The findings revealed that utilisation of devolution funds has got various ration, merits, challenges and hence recommendation being proffered. Various challenges are hindering the utilisation of devolution funds like corruption, political interference, limitations on human resources, and weaknesses in the internal structure and processes. The researcher suggested that Mutare Rural District Council create a budget, apply financing and increase civic involvement.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

MLGPWNH Housing	Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National
RDC	Rural District Council
MRDC	Mutare Rural District Council
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
VDC	Village Development Committees
PDC	Provincial Development Committee
DDC	District Development Committee
ZINARA	Zimbabwe National Roads Administration
LA	Local Authority
ZEPARU	Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis and Research
PM	Provincial Minister





# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The objective of the study is to investigate the effect of devolution funds on the service delivery of services by local authorities in Zimbabwe, specifically focusing on the utilisation of these devolution funds by the Mutare Rural District Council. The research aims to examine the services and activities carried out as well as the efficiency of these services in improving the lives of the people through the use of devolution funds.

### **1.1 Background to the problem**

Governments have a history of clinging to absolute authority and centralising national decision-making. Devolution, also known as decentralisation, is a recent trend that has gained traction in both unitary and federal countries (Hueglin & Fenna, 2015), with the goal of reducing the scope of the central government.

Countries such as China, the US, and various European nations that are large and heavily populated regard decentralisation as a crucial revenue performance strategy which enables them to bring services closer to the people by implementing federal arrangements, as stated by Clegg and Greg (2010). The trend in global governance, according to Rosenbaum (2013), is toward decentralisation. According to Winsemius and Guntram (2013), this has caused certain national governments to respond in a completely different way. Others have simply passionately defended their conventional ideas, while some have grown more accepting of opposition and democracy closer to the people by implementing federal arrangements, as stated by Clegg and Greg (2010). Zungura (2014) suggests that decentralisation has led to the delegation of responsibilities to more manageable levels at the local level. This has resulted in political stability and localized decision-making that caters to the specific needs of the community.

According to Wangari (2014), the government's desire to improve service delivery and get rid of structural inequities is what drives decentralisation. Globally, the drive for decentralisation has been at the centre of unexpected economic growth in nations like Nepal, Chile, and China, where it has revolutionised the economic centre and improved public service delivery. Clegg and Greg (2010) also noted that decentralisation has assisted in bringing services closer to people in nations like the United States and European economic powerhouses, and that this explains yield productivity in densely populated countries.

Various countries have established constitutions that regulate various forms of decentralization and models for their governance systems. These models encompass fiscal decentralization and decentralization of power. The decentralization of government operations has led to political and administrative devolution, with regional or local administrations assuming more responsibility, as noted by Rye et al.( 2017).Decentralised organisations occasionally possess legislative and executive structures that allow the legislature to pass fundamental laws. The Scottish approach to decentralisation, which started in 1998, empowered the Scottish Parliament to create primary legislation. In contrast, the decentralisation policies in Wales only provide administrative and executive power, with no significant legislative power granted. Decentralisation legislation are in effect in several jurisdictions, and regional government constitutions can be found, among others, in Austria, Germany, Spain, and Italy.

The United States is one of the most prominent instances of prosperous decentralisation, with more than 50 state governments and over 85,000 local governments functioning effectively. The federal government and independent states have been encouraged to pursue more ambitious objectives, which have led to better service delivery, according to Rosenbaum (2013).In order to provide excellence, public sector organisations in Malaysia realised they needed to improve and expand their commitment to good governance (Siddiquee, 2009). The delivery of services is inefficient, as evidenced by a number of complaints that have been made public, including employee misconduct, the misuse of authority, and sluggish action.

The implementation of decentralisation in Pakistan has led to various changes in the government structure at the provincial and sub-national levels. Responsibilities for

essential services such as education, health, water and sanitation, roads and transport, and agricultural services were given to the local governments. Because of this, new political structures were put in place, resource allocation procedures were revised, a significant number of staff were transferred to local government, and a new system of administration was created at the local level.

Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda are only a few of the nations where regional decentralisation has been successful (Dickovick & Riedi, 2010). In contrast, the consequences of decentralisation differed among African nations. Rarely is the relationship between decentralisation and sub-Saharan Africa studied. In the context of sub-Saharan Africa, very few research have examined the effects of decentralisation or decentralisation on service delivery to date (Tshukudu, 2014). Furthermore, research on the decentralisation of governance and service delivery have received an unbalanced amount of attention. Studies already in existence frequently evaluate service delivery in terms of accessibility, ignoring factors like service quality and customer satisfaction (Opiyo, 2014; Sujarwoto, 2012).

The establishment of 47 county governments in Kenya through the 2010 Constitution aimed to enhance service delivery efficiency. However, the transition from a central to decentralised government system has not been without its difficulties. Issues such as conflicts between governing authorities, corruption, and strikes have posed a threat to this system. Additionally, current research indicates that more than half of the population (about 51%) expressed dissatisfaction with the services provided by the county governments in Kenya as reported by Transparency International in 2015.

According to Mwenda (2010), African governments used to follow a centralised system of governance, and Kenya was a prime example where all decisions and powers were centralised in Nairobi, which hampered development in the country. However, in the 2002 elections, Mwai Kibaki implemented a decentralisation system that led to the development of schools, hospitals, roads, water projects, and reduced poverty, as stated by Ntuala (2010). As a result, both the public and the government demanded more effectiveness in the decentralisation process, and the sub-national bodies, such as councils, were given devolution funds to boost developmental matters.

The Zimbabwean Constitution of (2013) establishes the framework for the decentralisation or devolution of state powers and responsibilities. It mandates that, where necessary, state

powers and responsibilities be transferred to provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities in order for them to be carried out effectively and efficiently. In order to increase accountability, transparency, and transparency at the various levels of government, institutional capacity, skills, and competences will unavoidably face new demands as a result of the execution of the constitutional provisions.

Devolution brings government to the doorstep of the people hence they have easy access to the services provided by the government (Mapuva 2015). Furthermore devolution to local authorities it provides greater growth of stronger partnerships at a local level meaning councils

Drawing from experiences of other countries that have implemented decentralisation, it is apparent that several factors play a role in determining the success of such programs. These include the historical and political context, institutional design, legal frameworks, and the evolution of governance structures. In Zimbabwe, efforts to implement decentralisation are underway, and there is already significant administrative decentralisation in place. To ensure the successful implementation of decentralisation, it is crucial to adequately resource and strengthen existing decentralisation mandates. The implementation process is being overseen by the President and several other key players who are responsible for promoting accountability and transparency. Despite this, weak institutional capacities, including a lack of adequately skilled staff, could impede progress towards achieving devolution objectives

Related to Zimbabwe, it has adopted decentralisation or devolution to eliminate poverty for local people and ensure equitable sharing of resources. The Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) provides the framework for powers and responsibilities of government agencies on how to advance decentralisation. Experiences from other countries such as Scotland, Wales and Kenya gave Zimbabwe a remarkable picture of the strength of fiscal devolution and its impact on development. Zimbabwe introduced devolution to promote democracy so that the voice of the public must be heard and acted upon. Zimbabwe's Constitution has channelled responsibility for the use of devolution funds from central, provincial, metropolitan and local governments. With this in mind, however, the study seeks to question the impact of devolution funds service delivery in local government, and if not, so that the government can take corrective action to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of devolution funds in delivering services to citizens.

## **1.2 Statement of problem**

A crucial issue to consider is the financial resources available for municipalities, town councils, rural district councils, and their executives. The biggest obstacle to their ability to deliver services in Zimbabwe has been the insufficient funding allocated to them. Without a solution to this problem, the success of the devolution system could be at risk, as local councils may struggle to provide adequate services due to a lack of resources.

It is ironic that local authorities tasked with providing social services such as water supply, waste management, and basic healthcare are grossly underfunded. Centralised government bureaucracies in Africa and other developing countries have made it challenging to effectively provide public services (Mwabu et al., 2001).

The World Bank (2012) has described devolution as a successful tool for promoting development in various parts of the world, including the USA, Britain, Australia, South Africa, and Nigeria. However, according to the 2019 report by the Office of the Auditor General, several local authorities in Zimbabwe are facing difficulties in delivering their service mandates due to financial, institutional, and capability limitations. The report revealed that fewer funds are directed towards service delivery, with more resources being used for salaries. There has also been an increase in reported service delivery problems, which indicates weaker service provision by various local authorities.

Devolution has been identified as a critical element in achieving Zimbabwe's Vision 2030 by transferring governmental authority, responsibilities, and funds to Provincial and Metropolitan Councils and local authorities, thereby doing away with the centralised system of government. According to Chigwata (2019), devolution is necessary for deepening democratic practices, promoting locally-driven development, improving the delivery of public services, and promoting national integration while recognizing diversity. The provision of devolution funds by the central government has been viewed as a significant step in improving service delivery to citizens, and the government has allocated funds for devolution in fiscal budgets from 2019 to 2022 in line with the constitution, with a focus on infrastructural development such as water, health, education, and roads in local areas.

Under Zimbabwe's 2013 constitution, 5% of national revenues collected in a fiscal year are committed to provinces and local governments. In 2019, a total of US\$310 million from the national budget was allocated for devolution, to be distributed among 92 local

governments and 10 provincial councils. Originally, it was expected that this budget would increase by 12% and 15.2% in 2020 and 2021, respectively, but this was revised to ZWL\$703 million during the mid-year budget review and supplementary budget, which included allocations of ZWL\$120 million.

It is within this context that this study seeks to interrogate the how devolution funds affect delivery of services by local authorities to local citizens they serve.

### **1.3 Research objectives**

#### **1.3.1 Primary objective**

The purpose of this research was to analyse how devolution funds affect service delivery in local authorities, with a specific focus on Mutare Rural District Council as a case study.

#### **1.3.2 Secondary objectives**

- To determine the influence of devolution funds on service delivery.
- To explore key success factors affect the implementation of devolution funds.
- To establish the challenges in use of devolution funds.

#### **1.3.3 Statement of hypothesis**

- Ho: There is no association between devolution funds and service delivery.
- H1: There is an association between devolution funds and service delivery.

### **1.4 Research questions**

- What is the influence devolution funds on service delivery
- What are the key success factors in the implementation of devolution funds
- What are the challenges in use of devolution funds

### **1.5 Research assumptions**

Mutare Rural District Council councillors and executives will aware of devolution funds, its goals and objectives, implementation requirements and processes and will be able to appreciate its expectations such that they will submit useful information/data for the purposes of this research. Critical and confidential information relating to the research available shall remain as such. The study will rely on key informants, particularly those in the bureaucracy of the council and central government, who will provide essential documents during the research process. The researcher will also seek permission from the relevant ministry to attend council meetings, including committee meetings that are not typically open to non-councillors. The idea will be to understand more on how the council its policies and superintending their devolution funds after their programmer

implementation. The ministry of Local Government and Public Works, Provincial Council, Mutare RDC will grant permission for the research to be carried out in Mutare District.

By examining the effects of devolution funds on Mutare Rural District Council, it is expected that the results will generalise to other councils in Manicaland province and potentially to rural district councils throughout Zimbabwe

### **1.6 Significance to the study**

- The study is crucial for **the researcher** because it gives them a platform to connect the theory and practice they learnt in school and develop their research abilities. The research study will also enhance the researchers' research abilities since it offers insights into how to obtain data from many sources, including industry, market, and literary sources, each of which requires a different set of methodologies.
- **To the University** - Research will produce materials for the library and open doors for more study for other students and employees who want to do similar research. The study may also pave the path for additional study to be conducted by students at Bindura University of Science Education, raising the banner of the college even higher.
- **To the policy makers**-Information gathered from the relevant Ministries, especially the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, will be valuable in identifying measures to improve service delivery. This includes allocating sufficient budget to local governments, as well as educating beneficiaries on the benefits of devolution. It also helps in policy formulation that creating an enabling and conducive environment for facilitation of full participation of all stakeholders in Zimbabwe by bottom up approach through incorporating local authorities' leaders in policy formulation process and disbursing devolution funds.
- **To the organisation**- Moreover, the study is expected to provide practical recommendations that will serve as a valuable reference for Mutare Rural District Council to enhance their service delivery to their local residents. Additionally, it will be useful to administrators of other councils, highlighting the significance and advantages of improving service delivery and customer satisfaction.

- **To the Local Authorities in Zimbabwe and Africa-** Local authorities in Zimbabwe play a crucial role in delivering services to citizens within their respective jurisdictions? Service delivery is at the core of their activities. By identifying critical bottlenecks in service delivery, this study can help the Zimbabwean government address the deficiencies and improve the quality of services provided to citizens. The study can also assist local authorities in understanding the factors that affect service delivery and how they can improve in those areas. Furthermore, it can attract potential investors to both urban and rural areas, creating employment opportunities and reducing poverty. Overall, this study has the potential to benefit the Zimbabwean public by improving the quality of services provided by local authorities and promoting economic growth.
- **To the primary stakeholders-**that is the study will significantly contribute by ensuring clients, management, councillors, communities, residents, businesses, farmers will significantly benefit from the research will provide an insight of how devolution funds enhance service delivery through participation in decision making.

### **1.7 Scope and delimitation**

The study was limited to Mutare Rural District Council which is in Manicaland province of Zimbabwe, although it was necessary to extend it partially, to Mutasa Rural District Council appear to be performing better in as far as use devolution funds in service delivery is concerned. It provided with gaps for analysis. The research conducted at Mutare Rural District Council covered 36 wards that are in two chiefdoms namely Zimunya and Marange and emphasis was on one area of council's funds that is devolution funds as this was an area considered to be critical in the service delivery of Local Authorities process.

The population of the study included the major stakeholders who constitute the majority of the council's population represented by chairpersons of the Village Development Committees in the case of rural areas and heads of households in the Zimunya Township, urban settlement of Mutare town. However councillors constituted a critical component of the population since they will represent their electorate in council and will push for their proposed agendas .It also included principal officers of the council who do the work of the related resolutions of council and maintain the records of all council proceedings.



### 1.8 Limitations

The results were hampered by the researcher's limited financial resources and travel time for gathering both primary and secondary data. Due to the course requirements, this cross-sectional study was finished in a year. Due to the research's limited external validity and exclusivity to Mutare RDC employees and inbound customers, it was not applicable to other local authorities. The findings were therefore based on a specific point of research as they faced a longer period of time.

In addition, restricted access to information posed a challenge for the researcher as they were not able to obtain all the necessary information due to confidentiality and sensitivity. This resulted in a limited scope of research. Insufficient resources were also a hindrance as the researcher had to rely mostly on secondary sources such as internet news articles, published reports, and government publications. Furthermore, due to time and resource constraints, the research period had to be shortened, which impacted the quality of the results that could be obtained.

### 1.9 Definition of terms

Service delivery is the delivery of services to the communities within their jurisdiction (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013).

The term "**funds**" or "**tax transfer**" refers to the fair and balanced distribution of capital grants to provincial and metropolitan councils, local authorities, and other related allocations in accordance with any conditions set forth by the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013).

Devolution represents the practice of assigning or entrusting governmental power to provincial, metropolitan, and municipal authorities as needed. (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013)

The term "**devolution funds**" pertains to funds collected by the central government and allocated to lower levels of government to be used for the development of water, health, education, and road infrastructure in local areas. (Ministry of Finance 2022)

The RDC Act, Chapter 29:13 defines "**local authorities**" as a municipal council, town council, rural district council, or local board that is responsible for providing public services within a specific area or jurisdiction

### **1.10 Structure of the study**

Introduction, background of study, objectives, assumptions of study, significance of study, delimitations and limitations of the study, and chapter summary will be tackled in chapter 1

Chapter 2 focuses on definition of key terms, relevant theories to the study, conceptual framework and review of previous studies.

Chapter 3 focuses research methodology: research design, target population, data collections instruments etc.

Chapter 4 focuses on data presentation and analysis

Chapter 5 focus on summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations

### **1.11 Summary**

The study was prompted by poor service delivery in local authorities due to poor funding or lack of financial resources. The study seeks to examine the impact of devolution funds on service delivery in local authorities and to come up with measures that maximise the use of devolution funds

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on a review of the literature that supports the devolution of funding and service delivery to local authorities through theoretical and empirical data. This chapter's primary goal is to evaluate the study's applicability by contrasting it with earlier studies. In light of this, this chapter investigates how devolutionary funds affect local authorities' ability to provide services.

#### **2.1 Definition of terms**

##### **2.1.1 Devolution**

Devolution can also be transfer of power from a centralised governing power to any smaller or more localised regions of power using the process which is form of political decentralisation Erin Carroll (2022). Devolution can be characterised in the Zimbabwean context as the transfer of power from central government to local authorities N Madanhire (2019).The government and Political Encyclopaedia Britannica (2019), states that devolution is the transfer or the delegation of power to a lower level, especially from the central government to local or even regional administration and various examples can be that of the state, regional, or even local authorities. Using the England local government association (2020), they explain devolution as the transfer of powers and also the funding from the national to local government. This is done in the manner that the results should be effective to the extent that they will be more improved target public services growth and also considering the partnership between their public and private sectors will also be strong as they will be working with their community leaders. However, it is rare to find fully devolved units, for example, Rural District Councils and Urban Councils.

##### **2.1.2 Devolution Funds**

Devolution funds refers to the transfer of money and the power to spend it from the federal government to local governments. The Ministry of Public Works and National Housing (2019) defines devolution funds as funds allocated by the Treasury to local authorities to enhance social service delivery, including the repair and construction of schools, clinics, roads, water and sanitation systems, waste management, and electricity. Devolution funds are a series of policies intended to enhance the revenue or fiscal independence of subnational governments, as stated by Dube (2021).These assume various institutional such

as that of the creation of new subnational taxes and mainly they are created as a way to reduce the gaps that are between the government and its citizen in terms of economic and social development .According to B.Chidhakwa (2021),devolution funds can be in a mixed form as most of them come from revenue collections which will later be allocated as a budget by the central government on how to utilise them.

### **2.1.3 Service delivery**

Is the public's dependence on essential services like water, sanitation, roads and transportation infrastructure, housing-related infrastructure and affordable housing, refuse collection, street lighting, health services, and education being met? According to Need (2020), these services are frequently referred to as the "utmost concrete interactions" that citizens have with their government. It is the primary responsibility of local governments to provide services to citizens in their jurisdiction

### **2.1.4 Local Authorities**

As per the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013), the expression "neighbourhood specialists" alludes to both metropolitan and provincial regions. These are authorities who are tasked with representing and supervising the interests of people living in both urban and rural areas. According to the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013), a local authority has the authority to regulate the local affairs of the people living in the area for which it was established on its own initiative. In Zimbabwe, local authorities are the same as local government. Additionally, local government is in a better position to use local expertise and efforts to carry out its mandates. The capabilities doles out to nearby government are neighbourhood in nature as well as have an immediate bearing on the everyday existences of neighbourhood networks. The ordinary citizen can participate in local public affairs through local government.

According to T.Ishwor (2020) local government refers to the operations of companies, municipalities, district board, and other organisations tasked with carrying out duties pertaining to and concerning the population of certain area locate area locale).

### **2.1.5 Devolution Guidelines/Local Authorities Circular No.1 of 2019**

Circular No 1 of 2019, issued by the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, provides guidelines for the use of devolution funds released by the Treasury to local authorities. The circular emphasises the need for local authorities to utilise the funds towards improving social service delivery, with a focus on constructing/rehabilitating schools, clinics, roads, water and sewer systems, waste

management facilities, and electrification. In addition, the circular emphasises the importance of transparency and accountability in the use of these funds, encouraging local authorities to provide quarterly reports to the Ministry on their use.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.4.1 Efficiency Service Theory**

This theory focuses on how local authorities should proffer effective service delivery and also how they should be judged according to their abilities to provide individuals with services that they require. According to Mills (2019) the advocates of efficiency service theory believes that the idea of democracy does not usually apply to different political systems in the same manner. Sharpe (2010) gives an argument that different local government has the most efficient way to provide that are efficient and this can be done by compelling that if these local councils does not exist they should be anything to be created for local services to be provided in a good manner. The primary postulate of the efficiency service theory is that since it is the major agent for the provision of these services to the localities, the proponents claims that the efficient agent for the provision of these services are essentially local .Makinde et al (2016) however this shows a complimentary on how local authorities should provide their services hence being effective and vivid efficiency services supporting the theory.

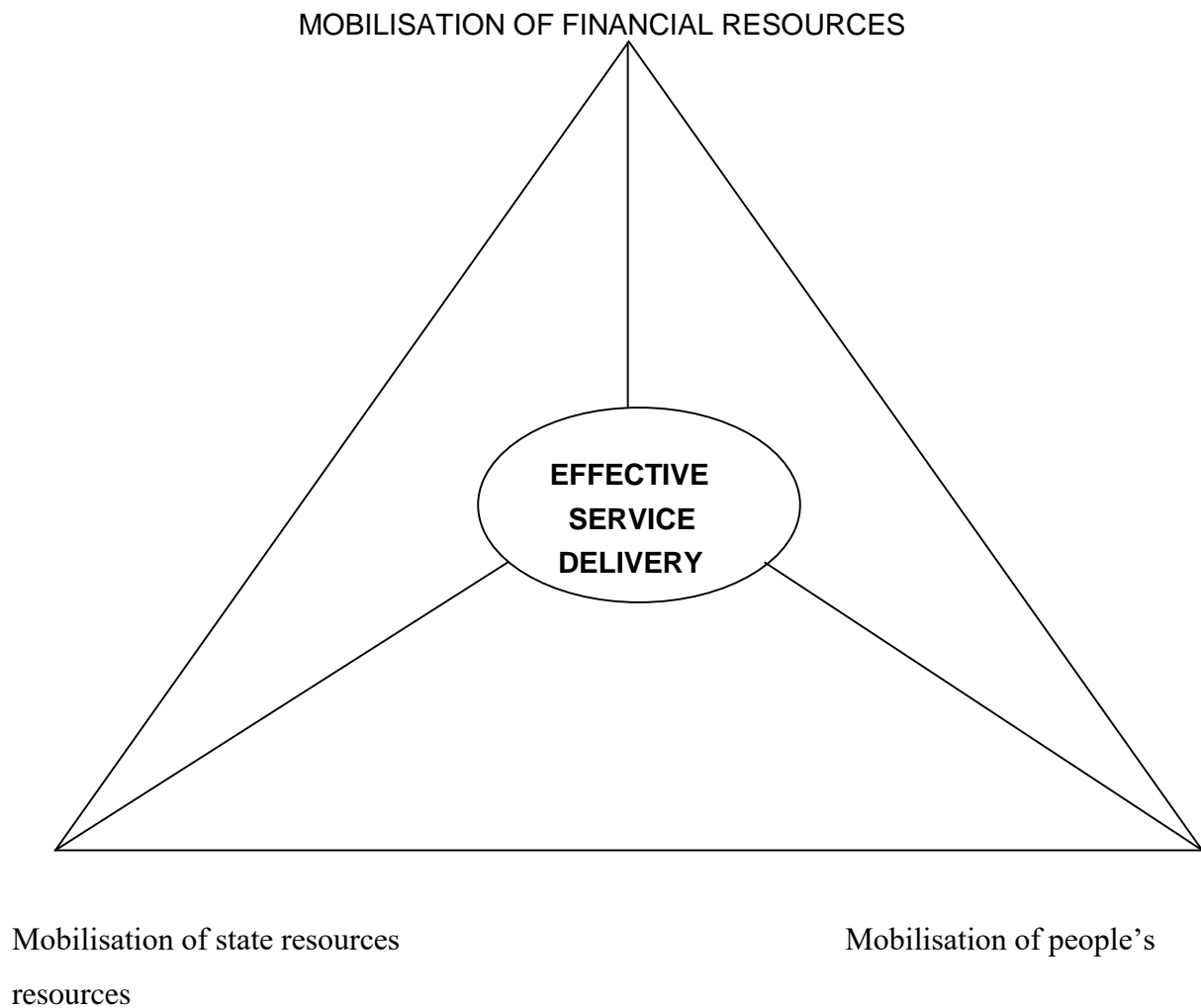
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### **2.4.2 Organisational Learning Theory**

The study also incorporates the organisational learning theory, which was developed by Argyris and Schon (1978) and posits that institutions must alter their objectives and actions to achieve those objectives. Among the main independent constructs of this model are organisational structure, including whether the organisation is centralised or decentralised; the sociocultural environment of the organisation, which encompasses endogenous factors such as technology and administrative procedures, and the strategic design of the organisation. The primary dependent construct is effectiveness. Devolution has brought changes to the way institutions are managed, with national and local governments having distinct responsibilities. Although Zimbabwe is currently experienced challenges associated with devolution, it has embraced decentralisation of power and resources to the local level, with the expectation that service delivery in all devolved functions, including the provision of public services by local authorities, will become more effective.

### **2.4.3 Resource mobilisation theory of local government diagram**

The Resource Mobilisation Theory of Local Governance
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Source: Secondary data (2023)

This begins with the preparation of monetary assets by creating imaginative market based instruments, for example, the Temasek model and sway abundance store as well as neighbourhood financial turn of events. This is joined by preparation of individuals support for nearby undertakings as well as the activation of state assets like land and abilities. When there are monetary assets, state assets and individuals' assets, viable help conveyance in the nearby government can be accomplished under devolution

In relation to current study it is appreciated that the Zimbabwean government has demonstrated its political willingness to implement devolution and its desire to devolve in relation to the current study. The public authority has carried out number of studios and gatherings on devolution

#### **2.4.4 Stakeholders' theory**

As stated by Werhane (1998), the stakeholder theory emphasises the role of managers in articulating shared values and forging relationships with stakeholders to achieve their organisational purpose. This theory is considered managerial because it is focused on guiding and shaping the actions of managers rather than simply addressing management theorists and economists.

In current research study, devolution funding is to impact positively on the service delivery to citizens. Devolution financing is to affect decidedly on the help conveyance to residents, the administrators of the assets should explain how to serve them and spotlight on conveyance the motivation behind these assets. This starts off by distinguishing the devolution finances partners who will direct in choice of tasks which line up with the requirements of different partners. The management of the local authority needs to comprehend the impact they are having on the stakeholders, compare this to the fund's predetermined objectives, and identify any service gaps that need to be filled in order for them to fulfil their mission. Through this the viability of the asset will handily be accomplished.

#### **2.4.5 Agency theory**

The relationship between principals and agents who exercise authority on behalf of organisations is the focus of theory, according to Rees (1985). According to this theory, principals must resolve two fundamental selection and control issues: They must first select the best agents and create incentives for them to behave in the desired manner. Second, they must keep an eye on their agents' actions to make sure they are carrying out the contract (Ayee, 2005). When the goals of the parties diverge, or when it is difficult or costly for the principal to verify the agent's actions, a problem arises. An adverse selection problem as well as a moral hazard problem arise as a result of the information asymmetry in this instance.

This theory is relevant to the current study as it relates to the relationship between principal and agent where the central government and devolution funds management committees and staff serve as agents. Information asymmetry and conflict of interest are difficulties experienced with agency theory and if this relationship is not carefully monitored. Local authorities may prioritise populist projects to demonstrate their effectiveness, rather than focusing on projects that meet the needs of the intended recipients. Therefore, it is essential to continuously monitor project outcomes to ensure that they contribute to the provision of



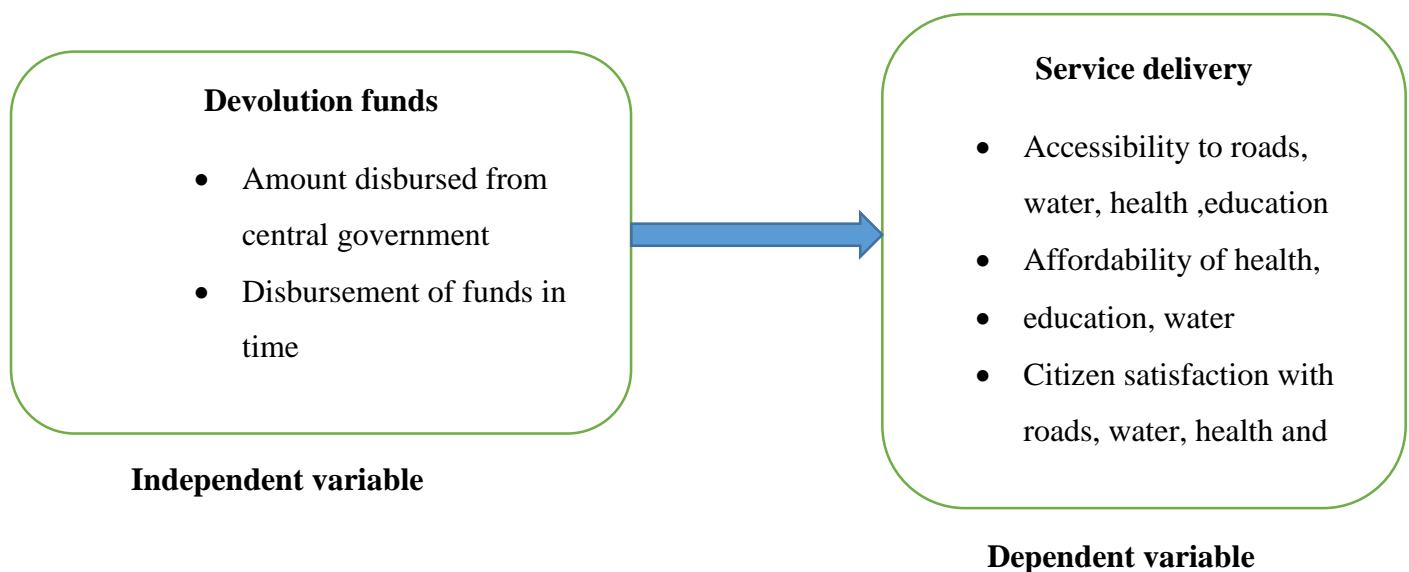
social goods, such as schools, hospitals, and roads, which benefit citizens within the jurisdiction of the relevant local authority.

#### 2.4.6 Contract theory

Tirole (2006) explains that the principal-agent theory emphasises the importance of clear communication between an agent and a principal to establish a mutual understanding of their respective needs and abilities. Contract theory is then used to ensure that the agent is adequately compensated for their work. This theory involves trust between both parties, as the agent trusts that they will receive fair working conditions and compensation while the employer trusts that the agent's credentials are valid. When both parties function competently, the resulting arrangement is likely to be mutually beneficial.

In relation to current study, the national government and other stakeholders entrusted with the management of devolved funds are the actors in the current study's devolved funding situation. If positive rewards are to be achieved from devolved funds, staff competencies should be taken into consideration when defining devolution structures. Likewise, subsequent to defining the objectives of the asset, correspondence between these entertainers on execution of the reverted reserve is significant for restorative activity. The criticism on the ability of the specialists to release their obligations requires ceaseless preparation of devolution supports staff to enhance their capacities to fulfil new needs of a developing society.

### 2.3 Conceptual model



## **2.5 Empirical Evidence**

### **2.5.1 Influence of devolution funds on service delivery**

The actual data on the link or connection between service delivery and decentralised governance are incredibly conflicting. The theoretical and empirical literature on the benefits and drawbacks of decentralisation is incredibly ambiguous. Decentralisation enhances service delivery, according to a number of studies (Balunywa, Nangoli, Muregwa, Teko, and Mayoka, 2014; Abe & Monisola, 2014). However, other researchers have discovered that decentralisation has a detrimental impact on the provision of services (Freinkman & Plekhanov, 2009; Olatona & Olomola, 2015). Wei-qing and Shi (2010) conducted a study in China and revealed that there has been ongoing fiscal decentralisation. Local governments may limit the supply of public services like education as a result of spending. Due to continual disagreements over resource allocation and utilisation in Kenya caused by a lack of coordination between district leadership and district assembly, poor service delivery and waste of public resources were the results (Karimi, Kimani, and Kenya, 2017).

Devolution generally tends to be associated with poorer economic growth, although revenue decentralisation is related with stronger growth, according to research by Gemmel, Kneller, and Sanz (2013) on the role of financial decentralisation in OECD nations. The significance of decentralisation in the provision of services was not examined in the study. Political decentralisation, according to Obicci (2014), can be a technique for enhancing service delivery. According to Yusoff et al. (2016), who embrace the aforementioned ideology, the decentralisation of government responsibilities enhances services by giving local governments, who are more accessible to the public, responsibility for service delivery.

Between 1999 and 2012, Olatona and Olomola (2015) looked at how fiscal decentralization affected the delivery of educational and health services. They found that fiscal decentralization had a positive effect on the delivery of educational services, while a high degree of fiscal decentralization had a negative effect on the delivery of health services. Oriakhi (2006) conducted a study on fiscal decentralisation and service delivery in Nigeria, hypothesising sub-national governments provided inadequate services due to factors such as rent seeking, ineffective monitoring of public spending, an unbalanced formula for distribution of funds favouring the federal government, and a mismatch

between expenditure assignments and sources of revenue. Meanwhile, Ibok (2014) studied local governance and service delivery, finding that low budget allocations, limited revenue sources for local governments, and difficulties in effectively utilising internal revenue generation were negatively impacting the provision of public goods at the local level.

According to research study done by different scholars observed that particularly in the context of Africa with the case study of South Africa and Botswana are two countries with a noticeable record whereby the central government granted local authorities devolution funds to improve effective service delivery to local citizens. In South Africa local municipalities such as Ekurhuleni and eThekweni are characterised in the provision of services using devolution funds and in Botswana local municipalities such as Gaborone and Francistown have a recognised reputation on the service provision of water, sanitation, housing, roads, refuse collection and human settlement.

According to Ekurhuleni municipality showed effectiveness on service delivery followed receive of devolution funds on water and sanitation. It established that 98% of the public have access to water supply from municipality. 60% receives piped water from inside their homes and 30% gets water from outside their yards. Ekurhuleni regards with high plans to escalate water service provision by implementing projects such as aqua leap program. From statistical point the city has largest water provision 97% has access to water supply and the remaining 3% have access to water through boreholes and water streams. It is noted that the city has adopted to a new stage on upgrading energy provision by establishing solar farm at the OT Tambo Precinct Wattville. Generators were installed at the Simmer and Jack Landfill site in Gemiston. Approximately a population of 10% does not have access to electricity and 66% have in-house prepaid metre. The city is continuous improving performance in provision of electricity energy in the community hence this can be an indication of how they are utilising their devolution funds in service delivery to local citizens.

According to research study done Ministry of lands, Housing and Environment (2001) indicated that Botswana as one of the most countries in the Southern Africa which is experiencing governmental grant or devolution fund in offering service provision. The study established that there was positive relationship between devolution funds and service delivery since the government passed down responsibility to local authorities'. Mosha and Lekorwe (1998) argued that it promoted democracy in the city since service provision it is

the aspect of democracy being answerable to the demands of the public. Also the Gaborone municipality facilitated in housing, water provision, electricity and sanitation schemes, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Environment (2001). Botswana former president Festus Mogae encourages local municipality's local authorities to share services with the aim of improving better living quality to citizens.

### **2.5.2 Challenges in use of devolution funds**

In a Kajiado County study, According to Makanyeza (2013), the main obstacles to improving service delivery were interference and political manipulation, corruption and a lack of accountability and transparency, inadequate civic participation, inadequate human resource policies, inadequate change management, inadequate staff capacity, inadequate planning, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation.

According to Abe and Monisola (2014), corruption is brought on by a lack of transparency and accountability, which may also be the cause of poor local social service delivery. Kaur (2011) presented that where a neighbourhood authority is truly responsible to a nearby electorate, it showed more impetus to work on the administrations for which it is capable. Improved performance necessitates accountability, according to the study.

Mubvami and Nhekairo (2003) and Steiner (2008) showed that public government are general delayed in dispensing reserves and lacking assets portions to neighbourhood legislatures to work with the course of devolution. This is shown by the fact that the treasury always has money left over. The government may continue to keep more than its fair share of funds intended for devolved units, which could be the cause of these delays. The distribution of funds has an effect on the entire devolution process. Inferable from an absence of financing, the decentralization cycle in numerous nations has not been totally operationalized, as per the strategy. Local governments and the national government also have disagreements regarding funding for local authority functions. Deficient financing and postpones influencing the cycle

Crawford and Hartmann (2008) brought up that among the best difficulties for neighbourhood specialists is the feeble asset base, which incorporates underfunded councillors, a large portion of whom don't have strong vehicle to cover the regions for which they are dependable. Due to inadequate or lack of controls over the sale of stands, leases, and shop licenses, a portion of the revenue is lost to the local authorities. The powerlessness of neighbourhood specialists to raise their own assets risks their own

independence. When subnational or local entities are heavily dependent on intergovernmental grants, especially conditional ones like funds of devolution, they typically have limited spending leeway (World Bank, 2011). The convenient readiness of right monetary reports and their confirmation is one of the critical marks of a compelling public monetary administration framework. This supports trust in a substance with respect to clients. This is essential for efficiently managing devolution funds.

Salman (2012) noted that Pakistan's experience suggests devolution can have significant consequences for countries with limited resources. He also observed that in Pakistan, the lower tiers government heavily depend on resources from central government, with provinces receiving 80% of their budget from the federal government.

The World Bank (2012) examined Kenya's decentralization experience and discovered that limited central-to-local resources hinder devolution power. Priority should be given to ensuring that local governments have the legal right to collect revenue from the moment they are established in the short term. Other countries' experiences have demonstrated that devolution leads to the need for new institutional structures and requires the development of human and infrastructural capacities.

According to Salman (2009), higher levels of corruption in decentralized entities impede the process's smooth execution. Recruitment, local public procurement, and local financial management are typically the components of the provincial and county structures that carry the greatest potential for corruption in local government. Also, payoff is viewed as the most widely recognized type of debasement in the arrangement of public administrations. As per an overview by Straightforwardness Worldwide, defilement is the greatest hindrance to devolution (Extending, Corsi, Kauffmann, McDonnell, Osterrieder, Pinaud and Wegner 2005). Olum (2014) asserts that the most significant and pressing obstacle to devolution that local governments must overcome is corruption. A similar report uncovered how neighbourhood legislatures took public subsidizes through obscure obtainment contracts and sporadic arrangements. As indicated by Juting et al. (2005), a Straightforwardness Worldwide study discovered that most of respondents were disappointed with the exhibition of 14 decentralized capabilities because of debasement and botch of public supports in neighbourhood specialists, as monetary controllers, for example, the Review Panel routinely report.

### **2.5.3 Key success factors in the implementation of devolution funds**

The adequacy of human and financial resources was found to be a factor in the implementation of decentralization programs in a study by Hartmann and Crawford (2008). According to Hartmann and Crawford (2008), local governments in Ghana and Tanzania frequently continued to rely on donor funds to carry out development activities. This could have an impact on the autonomy of local governments in making decisions as well as the viability of their locally led development programs. According to Chinsinga (2008), Malawi's extensive implementation issues included a donor-led process with no local support, resistance from national political actors, refusal to accept the loss of power, and infighting among local elites for conquest of limited areas that belonged to the resources of the local government. Salman (2012) also noted, based on Pakistan's experience, that devolution can have serious repercussions for nations already struggling with limited fiscal resources. He likewise noticed that in Pakistan there is an over-reliance of lower levels of government on the focal government, where the regions get 80% of their financial plan from the national government.

In surveying Kenya's insight of decentralisation as per an exploration concentrate on led by the World Bank (2012) on the key achievement factors in carrying out devolution. According to the World Bank (2012), in order for power to be devolved, resources must be moved from the central level to the local level. However, the question of how much, how quickly, and in what form cannot be answered in a single way. Finance follows function is a fundamental principle of devolution. The process of assigning roles is crucial because of this. Own revenues will be essential for providing county governments with resources and encouraging local accountability. Existing sources need to be revamped and new ones need to be developed in order for Kenyan counties to maximize their potential for self-employment. Temporarily, the need is to guarantee that district legislatures are lawfully enabled to gather income as it emerges. A county performance monitoring system could be built on contingent grants as its foundation. Grants can assist in (i) fostering healthy competition among counties and providing incentives for county governments as part of the sub-national performance monitoring system; (ii) monitor and report on its performance frequently; and identify key service delivery bottlenecks.

According to Hopkins (2002), strong legal frameworks and policy guidelines are crucial for the success of devolution programs. In the United Kingdom, devolution was implemented through Acts of Parliament, while Hopkins (2008) outlines the legislative

provisions that shaped regional government devolution in Europe. In Kenya, the new constitution of 2010 ushered in an unprecedented commitment to equitable service delivery through new, transparent, and accountable institutions, with the new system of country governments as the primary agent of change. UNDP (2015) stresses the importance of clear policies, a comprehensive legal framework, and a strong national institutional framework for successful devolution implementation in Kenya, without which devolution funds cannot be effectively utilised.

Other countries such as Kenya have learned that engaging citizens in devolution processes requires investment in both time and resources. These citizen engagements often involve changing attitudes, behaviours, and power dynamics, which can be difficult to measure. To effectively facilitate public participation, there is a need for the relevant authorities to develop internal capacity that integrates participatory processes into their systems. This includes making information more accessible and understandable to the public, such as budgets, plans, and legislation, and connecting with communication channels. It also involves mobilising citizens and conducting participatory planning and budgeting processes, among other measures.

## **2.6 Gap analysis**

Previous researchers have found in many studies that that local governments have become hubs for devolution, as evidenced by various reports. However, none of these studies have focused on how devolution funds are impacting overall service delivery by local authorities in Zimbabwe. This research has been initiated to bridge this gap by exploring the effects of devolution funding affects service delivery of Zimbabweans and suggesting ways to improve its performance. By doing so, the study seeks to strengthen the role of local authorities in promoting development in line with the objectives of devolution funds.

## **2.7 Summary**

In this study, key concepts such as devolution funds and service delivery have been defined and relevant theories and past studies related to the research objective have been discussed. This study is unique in Zimbabwe as it aims to investigate the impact of devolution funds on service delivery in local authorities, an area previously unexplored.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The methods utilised to gather the data for this study are covered in detail in this chapter. According to Simkus (2019), research methodology is a group of techniques and guidelines that can be applied to the investigation of a certain issue. The goal of this study is to show that its conclusions are reliable and correct.

#### **3.1 Research design**

Research design is an essence or arrangement of how a study is planned to provide supporting observations about questions the researcher wishes to answer (Saunders, 2016). It outlines the steps for gathering, analysis and interpreting data to solve a problem. Research design, according to Almaki (2016), is a process that aids in organising the how, when, and where of data gathering and analysis. Some of the most common types of research designs are descriptive and explanatory designs (University of Southern California Libraries, 2016). A mixed-methods research design was explicitly chosen by the researcher in anticipation of the requirements and circumstances of the research carried out as part of the study.

Descriptive research was chosen for the replication study because Fuller Hammlton et al. (2015) used it in their initial investigation. According to Siedlecki (2020), the descriptive research design accurately and methodically observes, describes, or validates natural aspects of groups gathered through quantifiable data, such as the relationship between variables. Descriptive research provides responses to inquiries like "who." What, Why, and How and permits the researcher to observe and describe study-related variables.

In order to provide a descriptive perspective on the topic of devolution funds and their effect on service delivery, the study used a descriptive research design. The researcher can use the descriptive method to gather data in a way that will make it easier to comprehend the problems facing the local government and come up with effective solutions to improve service delivery to local residents. A descriptive research design was used by the researcher to investigate how the Mutare Rural District Council's delivery of services is affected by the allocation of devolution funds. The researcher was able to collect quantitative and qualitative data on how devolution funds have affected the delivery of services at local



authorities with the help of a descriptive research design in this study. The researcher was able to connect service delivery and devolution funds with this design.

In contrast, the researcher experienced some drawbacks as a result of employing this research design. The researcher had difficulty covering a large number of respondents who posed a threat to external validity. On the other hand, since the corresponding sample represented the entire population, this was insufficient to invalidate the findings. The comprehensive representation of diverse respondents was enhanced by the weighting of the mean values. The Mutare Rural District Council was the only organisational unit of local authorities included in the findings. There was no representation from other local authorities.

### **3.2 Data collection instruments**

Refers to tools employed to obtain data relevant to solving the research needs According to Cooper and Schindler (2013), data collection tools are instruments used to gather empirical evidence, gain insight into a situation, and respond to research-inspiring questions. The interviews and questionnaires served to collect primary data. In this study, the questionnaires used closed questions and were given to respondents

#### **3.2.1 Data collection Procedure**

The study researcher initiated the process by sending a cover letter to all participants explaining their role in the study and the importance of providing truthful information. The participants were also assured that their responses would remain confidential and be utilised solely for research purposes. To maintain confidentiality and protect the respondents from any potential harassment, an envelope with the label "Questionnaire" and "Suggested Topic" was provided for the respondents to seal after completing the questionnaire. Adequate time was given to complete the survey, and the researcher utilised the pick-and-drop approach to manage the questionnaires.

#### **3.2.2 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a set of questions used to obtain data from respondents about their attitudes, opinions or experiences (Bhandari, 2021). According to Taherdoost (2016), the main purpose of the questionnaire was to discover applicable evidence in utmost dependable and valid mode. This instrument was used to collect data from Mutare-RDC employees and councillors and the researcher obtained consent from respondents. The researcher chose questionnaires as the most important primary data tool because data is fast, easy to analyse, and inexpensive. Structured, closed-ended questions were derived

from the goals during the data collection period. Closed-ended questions provide respondents with a basis for choosing a category that reflects their point of view. The researcher used questionnaires because they were thought to be a quick way to collect data from a population. Respondents also answered in confidence because they did so anonymously. The questionnaires allowed the majority of respondents, who were confined to their jobs, to respond whenever it was convenient for them.

### **3.2.3 Interview**

According to Taherdoost (2016), an interview involves asking questions to collect information. The researcher chose to use interviews because they allowed for precise and relevant answers to be obtained by asking specific questions. Furthermore, interviews provided the opportunity for the researcher to gain deeper understanding of respondent's ideas and views on the impact of devolution funds on service delivery. During the interviews, the researcher was able to use non-verbal communication to help assess the responses given. Additionally, interviews allowed for quick responses and encouraged respondents to answer questions they may have otherwise left unanswered due to confidentiality concerns.

### **3.3 Target population**

According to Vonk (2016), a targeted population is a group of people that are relevant to the study. Alvi (2016) defines target population as all members who meet specific criteria for a research investigation. The chosen individuals assist in data collection methods to provide insights for the research conclusion.

The researcher considered population for this study included Mutare RDC, workers, and councillors from different wards of the Mutare Rural District Council. The intent is to find out if effective service delivery was impacted by devolution funds. Because of this, the population size for the research examined is 98.

### **3.4 Research sample**

Sampling is the taking of a subgroup from preferred sampling structure or all-inclusive population (Taherdoost, 2016). Also, according to Boyd et al., (2022), sample is the collection or set of participants carefully chosen with regard to the aim of the study. Sample is a subgroup of the target population. Sample size can be characterised as the absolute number of the members under the review with composite, for example, age, orientation and geology so the all-out example addresses the whole populace. According to Kibuacha (2021), a sample size is the number of individuals included in a study to represent a

population. In order to collect the necessary data, the researcher made use of a straightforward method known as random sampling. This was done in such a way that each individual in the population had the same and distinct chance of being selected. According to Githui and Wario (2013), a person's inclusion in a study cannot be contingent on whether or not they possess the characteristic or outcome under investigation. The formula was utilised to determine sample size of 40 staff individuals since the review included measurable presumptions that the choice of people is irregular and impartial populace of 41% was utilised. The equation that can be found below was constructed with a confidence level of 95% and a precision level (P) of 5%. The standard error of the proportion, also known as the sampling error, was determined to be 0.050, resulting in a sample size of 40 as shown below.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq N}{e^2 (N - 1) + Z^2 pq}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5 \times 98}{0.05^2 (98 - 1) + 1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5} = 40$$

P=0.5, q=0.5,  $Z_{0.025}=1.96$ , e=0.05;

Where e= excepted error

n=sample size

N=entire population

Z= level of significance

p=Probability that individual has the characteristic or outcome being studied

q=probability that individual does not have the characteristic or outcome being studied

### 3.5 Sampling procedures

The selection of a subset of the population whose characteristics are taken into consideration in the current research is known as sampling (Turner, 2020). According to Githui and Wario (2013), which cite Groves (2010), sampling entails selecting a subset of the statistical population to estimate the characteristics of the entire population. Simple random, stratified, and systematic sampling are all examples of probability sampling methods (Crashaw and Chambers, 2013).The researcher chose probability sampling

method in the sense that samples were chosen random. In this current study, the researcher before randomly chose participants from the target population to determine sample size assured that all members of the target population were included. The researcher utilised the method of simple random sampling to gather the required data, ensuring that each member of population had an equal and identifiable likelihood of being chosen. In this regard, the researcher obtained answers from employees and councillors of Mutare Rural District Council. By using the simple random sampling researchers argued that it generated samples that were highly representative of the community.

#### **3.4 .1 Secondary data**

Both internal and external data were utilised in this research. Internal data pertained to information gathered within the organisation to facilitate effective decision-making for operational success. An example of such data was the amount of internal revenue generated by Mutare RDC in previous fiscal years before 2019, which was analysed to comprehend the funding pattern pre and post introduction of devolution funds. For external data the researcher used textbooks, journals, internet, newspapers, fiscal budgets and monetary policy statements.

Secondary data was used for this study because it helps the researcher to quick discover understanding more about the study as the sources are readily available before going to gather data. Also, it provides a basis for comparison for the data that was collected by the researcher and data collected by other researchers.

One limitation of using secondary data is that the data may have been collected for different purposes and thus may not fully encompass the specific population sample that the researcher wishes to investigate, i.e. managers, workers and residents whose service delivery has been impacted by devolution funds. To overcome this disadvantage, primary data was utilised as the main data collection tool.

#### **3.4.2 Primary data**

Primary data refers to information that was gathered explicitly for the purpose of research project and is customised to meet the specific requirements of the study. Primary data when being used it can have direct access to your area of study (Streefkerk, 2022). This source of data could be produced during the period in which the activities were done, but they can also contain later –produced sources (Furman University, 2019). The qualitative data was acquired through questionnaires and interviews.

The primary data was important for the current study in a way that the researcher can have better response rates, wide range of subjects can be covered, questions can be clarified, and greater depth of questions, decreases missing information, order of questions controlled and adds supplementary observational data.

### **3.5 Data analysis and presentation**

Data analysis an orderly cycle which includes the utilisation of factual and consistent strategies to depict, assess and represent information so that suitable end will be given. Walton (2013) conducted a study which involved grouping and synthesising data collected from respondents utilising SPSS software to present a thorough analysis of the results the study utilised both quantitative and subjective methodologies in information examination. The connection between service delivery and devolution funds was examined using a linear regression model. Engaging measurable procedures, like diagrams, tables, and pie graphs, were utilised to introduce the information.

### **3.6 Data validity**

The degree to which the analysis's output accurately reflects the phenomenon under investigation is known as validity. Validity exists if the data measure what they are supposed to measure. A study is valid if its procedures truly measure what they entitled to, and if there is absence of reasonable faults in making conclusions from the information (Garson, 2013). In this current study, validity of the questionnaire done by consulting university supervisor first and assisted in making some corrections before data collection was done. The questionnaires used in this study were pre-tested to make sure that the participants understood them and that they were not flawed. Pilot study was conducted to ensure validity.

The study utilised construct validity to confirm that the measurement was accurately measuring the intended variable, and not measuring other unrelated variables.

### **3.7 Reliability**

The degree to which an assessment tool yields predictable and consistent results is referred to as its reliability. In this study, a 5 point Likert scale was used to measure a latent variable, and all questions were found to reliably measure the same reliable (Heale and Twycross, 2015). Reliability is the dependability of a measure. With a sample size of 98 workers and councillors, a Cronbach's alpha was performed. SPSS was used to measure reliability in a reliability test analysis, and a Cronbach's alpha was used. Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is considered reliable, according to Taber (2018).

### **3.7.1 Pilot testing**

To have an estimation of the time and resources required to conduct the research and identify sampling issues, the questionnaires were first be pre-tested using 10 questionnaires .This exercise helped the researcher was able to confirm that surveys yield the necessary data and that the intended group could understand the technical jargon. This activity was conducted through online questionnaires.

### **3.8 Ethical considerations**

According to Walton (2013), research ethics are particularly interested in analysing the ethical issues that arise when people participate in a study. Ethical considerations in research, according to Bhandari (2021), are a collection of principles that guide your study designs and actions. Research ethics entails applying fundamental ethical principles when carrying out research. The following is to be observed, with the exception of the Mutare Rural District Council case study, for ethical reasons.

#### **3.8.1 Integrity and professionalism**

The study researcher obtained permission from Mutare Rural District Council to access the relevant departments for the study. The researcher ensured that participants were fully informed about the research and obtained their consent to participate. The study will be conducted solely for academic purposes, and private information will be kept confidential. Additionally, the researcher will show respect for the authority of both offices and individuals while conducting the study..

#### **3.8.2 Fairness**

It is one essential ethic that has to be considered by local authorities in the sense that all their decisions must not be one sided, but fairly to both sides between the office and public people. Selflessness has to be adopted by the official in their daily operations activities as one of good ethical conduct.

### **3.9 Summary**

In this chapter takes care of the issues that structure the foundation of the research study. It also outlined the appropriate techniques and research methods that were used to obtain the necessary information on the effect of devolution funds means on service delivery in local authorities. The data will be analysed and the research findings will be presented in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter to presents and analyse the data gathered from the field .The analysis of the data gathered will be based on profile of respondents and presentation and discussion of findings made by the researcher during research process through various interviews and questionnaire. This chapter examine its findings gathered from the field and presented using tables' .Above all, these findings will led to cross examination with the help of research objectives whether the impact of devolution data on service delivery fully observed and presented through profile of respondents, presentation and discussion of findings.

#### **4.1 Sample Profile**

Out of the 40 questionnaires distributed, 40 were returned, which corresponds to a response rate of 100%. After the preliminary analysis, 40 valid responses remained. The demographic profile revealed that 52.5% were men and 47.5% were women. In addition, the demographic profile revealed that the marital status of single (20%), divorced (5%) and widowed (12.5%) was lower than that of married (62.5%), suggesting a probability-based sampling technique was due to which the samples were selected using a simple random sampling method Creswell (2018). The results reflected that participants in the 20-30 years, 30-40 years, 40-50 years, and over 50 years age groups had a larger sample composition with high incidences of 27%, 10%, 17.5%, and 45%, respectively. According to the results, most respondents were over 50 years old. Respondents' educational attainments included O'level (17.5%), Diploma or Certificate (15%), Graduate (55%) and Postgraduate (12.5%). Most participants indicated that the degree was the highest academic degree, which gave them security. According to the researchers, the information collected came from well-educated participants. Most of the participants had worked for the council for 15 years or more, as shown by the largest percentage of 45% compared to others. The work experience was crucial for the researcher to understand how the respondents are becoming familiar with the subject under study. Most importantly, most respondents have served on the rural council for more than a decade, which means they have sufficient experience.

#### 4.1.2 Interview response rate

The researcher prepared some questions for the Council Chief Executive Officer and four area managers and all of them were in touch for interviews and this made interview response rate of 100%.

#### 4.2 What is your frequency service delivery to local citizens

Table 4.1: What is your frequency service delivery to local citizens

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
once per week	14	35.0	35.0	35.0
twice a week	3	7.5	7.5	42.5
Valid once per month	13	32.5	32.5	75.0
twice a month	10	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2023)

The table above illustrates that the level of service provision to the local citizens as once per week, twice per week ,once per month and twice a month and twice a month with high incidences of 35%,7.5%,32.5%,and 25% respectively. The general idea was that service provision was on the increase and satisfying to residents of the district. Most of the respondents pinpointed that council was met the needs of communities. This assisted the researcher to obtain more information pertaining service delivery.

#### 4.3 Reliability analysis

##### 4.3.1 Service delivery

Table 4.2: Reliability Statistics



Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.760	3

#### 4.3.2 Devolution funds

Table.4.3 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.864	3

The internal consistency of the scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is considered a more reliable threshold (Taber, 2018). All the two constructs had scores of at least 0.7; service delivery (0.760) and devolution funds (0.864). This assured the researcher that the data being used during the research process was more reliable.

#### 4.3.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation (r) measures the direction of association of the relationship between variables, according to (Pallant, 2011); Hair et al., 2016). In the study, correlation analysis was utilised to assess the linear relationship between constructs in the model. The correlation between service delivery and devolution funds was 0.645, indicating a positive relationship. All correlations were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) and positive, confirming positive relationships between all variables in the model. Table 3 below presents the outcomes of the correlation analysis.

#### 4.3.4 Correlation analysis

Table 4.4 Correlation analysis

	Service delivery	Devolution funds
Pearson Correlation	1	.645
Service delivery Sig. (2-tailed)		.127
N	40	40

	Pearson Correlation	.645	1
Devolution funds	Sig. (2-tailed)	.127	
	N	40	40

Correlation is significant at the 0.01(2-tailed)

**Source: Primary data**

#### 4.3.5 Linear Regression Analysis

According to Hair et al. (2016), linear regression analysis was utilised to investigate the anticipated correlation between variables. The findings presented in Table 4 shows that the model's R-square value was 0.635, indicating that devolution model accounted for 63.5% was also observed, representing a 62% variability in service delivery. However, when dealing with smaller sample sizes, an adjusted R-Square of 0.620 was utilised, as recommended by Pallant (2011). Overall, the results suggest that devolution funds predictor can explain a significant amount of variance.

#### 4.4.0 Model R Square

Table 4.5 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.645 <sup>a</sup>	.635	.620	.69544

a) Predictors (Constant), Devolution funds

b).Dependent variable (Service Delivery)

#### 4.4. 1 Model Fit

Table 4.6 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.175	1	1.175	62.429	.001 <sup>b</sup>

Residual	18.378	38	.484		
Total	19.553	39			

a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery

b. Predictors: (Constant), Devolution funds

### Source Primary data 2023

Anova was used to estimate the overall statistical significance of the model. The results of the study indicated that the model was statistically significant, as evidenced by a positive F-statistic and a significant p-value,  $F(1, 38) = 62.429$ ,  $p = 0.01$ . This reflects that the model was statistically valid. However, the F-test only considers the statistical significance of the entire model. The regression coefficients were also determined as shown in Table 7 below. According to the results in Table 7, the predictor variable had a statistically significant impact on service delivery with devolution funds. Devolution funds have the greater impact on service delivery, with a beta of 0.525, a t-statistic of 10.551, and a p of 0.0127. At a 95% confidence interval, the coefficient and t-score were positive and statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The regression equation for the model was expressed as: Service delivery = 2.879 (constant) + 0.547 (devolution funds).

### 4.4.2 Regression

Table 4.7 Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.879	.079		3.662	.001
Devolution funds	.547	.052	.525	10.551	.010

a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery

Table 5 able 5.1.3 shows the results of the hypothesis test. Based on the results discussed above, the hypothesis received empirical support.

Table 4.8 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Result
H <sub>1</sub> : Devolution funds positively influences service delivery	Supported

#### 4.5 Key success factors in implementation of devolution funds

The objective in this section was to examine of key success factors in implementation of devolution funds. Possible critical success factors in implementation of devolution funds identified from literature (see literature review chapter) were suggested to the respondents (employees, councillors) and they were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed based on a scale that ranged from: 1=disagree to 5=strongly agree. The descriptive statistics shows summarised mean and standard deviation in table below

##### 4.5.1 Statistics

Table 4.9 statistics

	Adequate human and financial resources	Strong legal framework and policy guidelines	Citizen participation to foster transparency and accountability	Strong political will
N	Valid 40	40	40	40
	Missing 0	0	0	0
Mean	2.93	4.18	2.80	3.63
Std. Deviation	1.289	.903	1.324	1.148

The results of findings above shows all factors have (mean >2.00) are the key success factors in implementation of devolution funds. Strong legal framework and policy

guidelines and strong political will were ranked highly with mean of 4.18 and 3.63 respectively as the determinants of proper success factors in implementation of devolution funds. Strong legal framework and policy guidelines with mean of 4.18 and strong political will with mean of 3.63 means that the participants 52.5%,60% respectively agree that the strong legal framework and policy guidelines was utilised as important factor in use of devolution funds as shown on tables 5 below.

The surveyed respondents generally concurred with regards to the standard deviations of the factors such as adequate human and financial resources, citizen participation to promote transparency and accountability, and strong political will, which were greater than 1. In statistics, standard deviation is a measure of how spread out a dataset is (Levine, Stephan, Krehbiel & Berenson, 2013). A low standard deviation indicates that the data points are closely clustered around the mean, while a high standard deviation suggests greater variability and uncertainty in the results (Swink, Melnyk, Cooper & Hartley, 2014).

It was clear from the findings that most of the respondents were in agreement that strong legal framework and policy guidelines and strong political will was key success factors in use of devolution funds. The respondent's views were represented by 52.5% and 60% respectively.

Table 4.10 Strong legal framework and policy guidelines

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	1	2.5	2.5	2.5
strongly disagree	2	5.0	5.0	7.5
Neutral	1	2.5	2.5	10.0
Agree	21	52.5	52.5	62.5
strongly agree	15	37.5	37.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.11 Strong political will

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	4	10.0	10.0	10.0
strongly disagree	3	7.5	7.5	17.5
Neutral	3	7.5	7.5	25.0
Agree	24	60.0	60.0	85.0
strongly agree	6	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

#### 4.6 Challenges in use of devolution funds

This section is in line objective which dwells on establishing challenges of devolution

Table 4.12 Statistics

	Inadequate fund allocations and delayed fund disbursements	Corruption or mismanagement of funds	Lack of devolution management	Capacity and political interferences	Weak governance systems	Weak communication and financial management systems	Weak resource base
Valid	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.78	4.38	4.08	4.53	4.38	4.23	4.38

Std. Deviation	.423	1.125	.997	.816	1.030	1.187	.979
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The above all factors shows (mean >4.00) are the challenges in use of devolution funds .Inadequate fund allocations and delayed fund disbursements ranked highly (mean=4.78) while lack of devolution management ranked lowly (mean=4.08).The standard deviation of inadequate fund allocations and delayed fund disbursements, lack of devolution management, capacity and political interferences and weak resource base have average of 0.80 while average standard deviation of corruption or mismanagement of funds, weak governance systems and weak communication and financial management systems is 1.114.Findings from table5.3.1 clearly showed that 31(77.5%) of the respondents strongly agree that inadequate fund allocations and delayed fund disbursements can become major challenge in use of devolution funds on service delivery if they kept static,9(22.5%) also agree with this view.

Therefore it was clear that most of the respondents strongly agree with this point that inadequate fund allocations and delayed fund disbursements was major challenge in use of devolution funds on service delivery by local authorities. This was evidenced by high percentage who concurred that is 77.5% of the respondents who were in agreement with this opinion.

Above all, this can also be supported by standard deviation of 0.423 which is very low meaning that data of inadequate fund allocation and delayed funds disbursements with mean (4.78) and also it gave general impression that the views of respondents are closely related is major barrier in utilisation of devolution funds (Swink, Melnyk, Cooper &Hartley, 2014).On the other hand, weak communication and financial management system has high standard deviation of 1.187 cast doubt that is challenge in use of devolution funds (Swink, Melnyk, Cooper &Hartley, 2014).

#### **4.7 Discussion of findings**

The study confirmed the relationship between devolution funds and service delivery, thereby accepting hypothesis one (H<sub>1</sub>).The results resonate with earlier studies by Open Government Partnership (2014), Chome (2015) and Sikika (2015).The results provide empirical evidence that local authorities in Zimbabwe value the solidity of devolution funds that gives local citizens unlimited accessibility, affordability, availability, acceptability to

services like health, education, roads, water and sanitation. These characteristics are crucial to local authorities as they enable residents to successfully access to quality public services. Devolution funds has been found as important success vehicle of delivering public services Chigwata (2019) emphasised the usefulness of robust devolution for improving satisfaction conducive environments. Chigwata (2019) emphasised the importance of robust decentralisation for improving user satisfaction in enabling environments.

The objective 2 established to a greater extent that key success factor in implementation of devolution funds are strong legal framework and policy guidelines and strong political will. The outcome go in hand with findings of Hopkins (2002) and UNDP (2015) that for proper success implementation of devolution needs legislative or constitutional powers and a comprehensive legal framework. Also they concluded that without strong central clarity and capacity, devolution funds cannot be implemented successfully. Above all, strong political will confirmed on the table 5.2.3. This also resonates with findings from Kenya by Lipsky et.al (2015) and Tilburg (2008), respectively. It can deduced that service delivery also hinges upon the ability of the political actors to determine key attributes for effective provision of public service. In order to identify the crucial features required for successful provision of public service, various stakeholders need to be involved. These may include considering the type of government initiative, ensuring that policy and programme selections technically sound and country-led, mobilising stakeholders, gaining public commitment and allocating resources appropriately, applying accountability measures, maintaining continuing of effort over time, and promoting learning and adaptation. World Bank (2018) postulated that most quality delivery of public services are attributed of the final users' participation to foster accountability and transparency to understand how to utilise devolution funds. Thus, strong legal framework and policy guidelines and strong political will are essential antecedent of service delivery with devolution funds.

Objective 3 determined challenges in use of devolution funds .These challenges were confirmed as shown in table 5.3.1. Olum (2014), Hope (2014), World Bank (2015) and Ayres.et.al (2017) conducted similar studies in Ghana and Tanzania, and their findings were consistent with the results of this study. It pinpointed that inadequate fund allocation and fund disbursements and corruption or mismanagement of funds, political and capacity interference are the major challenges in utilisation of devolution funds towards service delivery This includes delaying fund disbursements by ministry of finance (Treasury) in funding local authorities which is insufficient thus slow devolution process. In addition, the



Office of Auditor General (2019) identified a number of challenges in service delivery, such as: weak governance structures, where councillors lack the necessary skills, and on governance issues, factors such as the lack of policies and manuals of procedures, and non-compliance with legal regulations. On the other hand, Chigwata (2019) found that sub-national or local entities now rely on intergovernmental grants, particularly those with conditions that affect devolution and service delivery.

#### **4.8 Presentation of Interview findings**

The presentation of interview findings was done according to the research objectives which includes to determine the influence of devolution funds on service delivery? Explore key success factors in implementation of devolution funds? Challenges faced in use of devolution funds? The data collected from four respondents (management), engineer, treasurer, social services officer and chief executive officer using research questions.

##### **4.8.1 To determine the influence of devolution funds on service delivery**

###### **Question 1: What do you understand by the term devolution funds?**

In an interview with director of road engineer from technical services department and director of social services, both gave a summary opinion on the understanding of devolution funds. From the director of technical services opined that

*“Devolution funds as the money and authority disbursed by central government to local authorities meant for infrastructure development such rehabilitation of roads, construction of schools and clinics”*

So, general overview of the definition, he summarise that devolution funds are meant for capital projects. From the director of social services posited that

*“Devolution funds money from the central government meant to develop districts or provinces with certain allocations where projects are selected by community”*

From Chief Executive Officer and treasurer concurred on their definition that devolutions are *intergovernmental funds allocated by ministry of finance (treasury) in improving social service delivery such as water ,sanitation, sewer and solid waste ,rehabilitation of schools ,roads, plant and equipment.*

In brief assumption said that money meant for capital projects not for salaries as stipulated in devolution guidelines (2019).

The above general impression from the representatives resonates with Chigwata (2019), Zinyama and Chimanikire (2019) assertions that it promotes sustainable and equitable development of Zimbabwe, promoting local driven development, tool to eliminate an overly centralised system of government that strengthens democracy while promoting peace and national integration while respecting diversity.

###### **Question 2: Do you think devolution funds brought improvements in service provision to communities' welfare?**

The respondents pinpointed that devolution funds are of paramount importance because it improves public areas in service delivery to the people at local level and they said it can be done only if adequate implementation of resources done and if disbursement done according to plan. The essence of devolution funds plays pivotal role in the social welfare of residents such as:

### Efficiency

The use of devolution funds at Mutare Rural District Council had provided several impacts. Efficiency is chief among them that brought by devolution funds at Mutare Rural District Council. The researcher observed that the funds have become motivating vehicle to local authority to deliver effective services to Mutare rural timeously and with efficient utilisation of resources. In 2020 several projects were done, they managed to purchase equipment that used in service delivery as mentioned by engineer and social services director

*“So far we managed to purchase tipper truck, tafe tractors, water bowsers, vehicle, and dumper trailers with use of devolution funds”*

This pointed out how efficiency has been brought by the funds to raise standards of service delivery. The pictures below are the evidence of the equipment bought for service provision.

*Figure 4.1 Equipment's bought using devolution funds*

#### Road Equipment Capitalisation (Tipper Truck)

- a) Status : Delivered
- b) Number of beneficiaries: All
- c) Remarks: Ready for work
- d) Cost: **ZWL 854,000.00**



3

#### Road Equipment Capitalisation (2 x Tafe Tractors)

- a) Status : Delivered
- b) Number of beneficiaries: All
- c) Remarks: Tractors in Use
- d) Cost: **ZWL 1,118,000.00**



3

### Road Equipment Capitalisation (2 x Dumper Trailers)

- a) Status : Delivered
- b) Number of beneficiaries: All
- c) Remarks: Dumber Trailers in Use
- d) Cost: **ZWL820,000.00**



### Devolution Project Supervision Vehicle

- a) Status : Delivered
- b) Number of beneficiaries: All
- c) Remarks: Vehicle in Use
- d) Cost: **ZWL 543,774.86**



9

7

### Road Equipment Capitalisation (2 x Water Bowsers)

- a) Status : Delivered
- b) Number of beneficiaries: All
- c) Remarks: Bowsers in Use
- d) Cost: **ZWL 391,000.00**



11

**Source: Primary data 2023**

## Accountability

Is one of the impact of devolution funds at Mutare Rural District Council (MRDC) in a such that way that the funds play an important role which enable the local authority to be answerable to the citizens. During an interview with the engineer opined that devolution funds enhanced customer satisfaction, it promotes accountability. In 2020 the department of social services mentioned that they managed to build schools using devolution funds as it was said by the housing director from social services department

*“With devolution funds the department managed the construction of schools to improve the quality of education in various communities”.*

One of the officials mentioned that these this project improves education facilities to the community. The pictures below the schools which was constructed at various wards.

*Figure 4.2 Buildings constructed using devolution funds*





Ndorwe Primary School



Staff houses at Madanga clinic

**Source: Primary Data 2023**

#### **4.8.2 Key success factors in implementation of devolution funds**

**Question 1: Identify the projects and measures to be put in place in utilisation of devolution funds?**

According officials who represented the organisation were interviewed pinpointed that,

*“we are currently pursuing the following projects utilising devolution funds”*

The officials mentioned that the following projects are being undertaken welfare of communities. The pictures below are the evidence of the projects

*Figure 4.2 Unfinished projects financed by devolution funds*



Odzi Community Hall



Odzi Community Hall





### Construction of Mazonwe Secondary School

- a) Status : On going
- b) Number of beneficiaries: 120 households
- c) Remarks: superstructure brick work complete. Mobilizing of roof materials in progress.
- d) Cost: **ZWL 411,431.55**



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## Manzonwe Secondary School classroom under construction

### Construction of Ndorwe Primary School

- a) Status : On going
- b) Number of beneficiaries: 100 households
- c) Remarks: Backfilling base still in progress. Mobilizing of other materials in progress.
- d) Cost: **ZWL 411,431.55**



23

### Bazeley Bridge District Service Centre Toilets

- a) Status : Ongoing
- a) Remarks: Purchase of Materials for the Repair of Bazeley Bridge District Service Centre Public Toilets
- a) Cost: **ZWL 360,000.00**

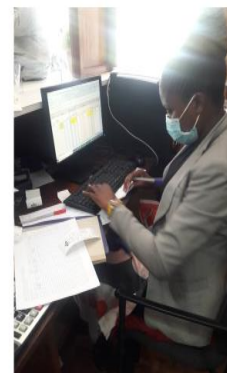


25

## Computerization

- a) **Status** : Works in Progress
- b) Number of beneficiaries: All
- c) **Remarks**: Purchase of Sage Evolution Software and LCD Projector, Software Installation and Migration to Sage Evolution
- a) **Cost**: **ZWL 1,657,247.00**

### Computerization



25

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## Measures to be put in place for effective utilisation of devolution funds

### Enactment of consistent policies

Respondents (management) from Mutare Rural Council, were all interviewed and all concurred that

*“Effective use of devolution funds to prosper, there is need enactment of consistent policies”*

According to UNDP (2015), the national government must set clear policies and guidelines on the constitutional provisions which govern operations of devolution funds. On the other hand, the major challenge being posed is that the central government it lays out incoherence policies such as local authority are being imposed a directive for unfunded expenditures to run administration. In brief, consistency of policy making is only the robust move for effective utilisation of devolution funds.

### **Autonomy of power and authority**

Management of Mutare Rural District Council pinpointed that the central government should more independence to local government and local authorities on how they spend their money. Their major issue was that there are being a directive by some central government officials to utilise funds in certain areas or to purchase equipment from certain firms or suppliers. This will be a vehicle of proper utilisation devolution funds.

### **Question 2: What are the benefits that were brought by key success factors in use of devolution funds in improving service delivery in Mutare Rural?**

#### **Enhance ownership of local development initiatives**

The director from social services department noted that devolution funds helped citizens to own projects being undertaken in various wards like construction of community hall in Odzi to serve community in developing their skills. Therefore this clearly utilisation of devolution funds on projects is posing merits to local communities

#### **Roads Rehabilitation**

The local authorities are conducting road maintenance programs, the technical services engineer from Mutare Rural District Council mentioned certain projects which were accomplished by the employment of devolution funds. For example in Marange Rural Service Centre, Sambenyara roads which expected to benefit  $\pm 1000$  beneficiaries. It was in bad state when residents and drivers launched complains through councillors to council claiming the renovation of roads which now is thing of past.



### **Affordability and accessibility of basic services**

Representative of Mutare Rural District Council throughout the interview opined that is vehicle for accessing social services at affordable prices such as construction of schools ,clinics among others which are the key issues being tackled in use of devolution funds. Increasing citizens in accessing services in distinct parts of the country and accelerate growth (Kenya School of Government, 2015).This improving the living standards of citizens in various communities and lead to attainment of vision 2030.

### **4.8.3 Challenges in use of devolution funds**

#### **Question 1. What are the problems faced in utilisation of devolution funds?**

#### **Delay of funding**

From the interview with Mutare Rural District officials mentioned major challenges in the utilisation of devolution funds\

is a lot of bureaucracy in accessing funds which is long and time consuming .They also complained about under and late disbursement by treasury to local authorities as a consequence it procrastinates the execution of projects and whole devolution process. This resonates with similar studies by Mubvami and Nhekairo (2003) and Steiner (2008).This situation was pinpointed by Pfeffer in his theory of resources dependence (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978).

#### **Inflation**

From treasurer mentioned that volatility of the economic situation of the country is eroding the value and the effectiveness of devolution funds. As highlighted by the social service director

*“Use of Zimbabwe dollar is being pegged with parallel market rate when paying services or buying equipment and quotations in \$ZWL are only varied for one day this will intern delays procurement process”*

As posited by Marumahoko (2010) explicit how the inflation affecting financial resources in local authorities.

#### **Corruption**

During the interview with one of the official at Mutare Rural District Council pinpointed that some the employees left expelled from the organisation after abuse of office in use of devolution funds. Some cases are still being investigated through audits. This type of corruption is not financial terms only but in form of lack of fundamental services that could have been provided that would be benefitted community welfare (UN Secretary General 2012) .Therefore corruption is chief among challenges faced in use of devolution funds by local authorities.

## **Question 2. What are the weaknesses of devolution funds?**

The director of social services department pointed out the main weakness that

*“Devolution funds will not permit to use in areas or projects planned by council and for instance they want to construct a sub office in Odzi township but they were directed to build Odzi community hall”*

In summary, they mentioned that devolution funds can only be utilised according to provisions of Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) and devolution guidelines of 2019.

## **4.9 Discussion of findings**

Devolution funds have played pivotal role in local authorities to improve various sectors of social welfare of the communities. In the case of Mutare Rural District Council were accomplished construction of schools such as Ndorwe primary school ,purchase of equipment ,rehabilitation of roads and procurement of equipment .The era of devolution funds has managed to pose positive benefits such as access to basic services, accountability ,transparency and enhancement of communication among stakeholders.

Devolution funds are intended for the aim of satisfying public needs. According to constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) local authority are obliged to take responsibility of managing the affairs in area of its jurisdiction. This implies that the citizens should be satisfied by public services being provided by councils. The lower tiers are delegated power and authority by central government to utilise devolution funds according to prescribed projects to raise standards of communities in terms of living standards and in line with vision 2030 such as establishment of recreational facilities, rehabilitation of roads, construction of schools and clinics .Muchadenyika (2013).During data collection period, the researcher observed a lot of loopholes which are still found in Mutare rural areas that

some roads were still in bad condition like Burma valley, Ndorwe and some wards in Marange like Chimio and Mukwada ,also the community hall was in ramshackle condition as compared to current standards community halls being constructed like Odzi .Above, the researcher noted in some areas service standards are still at minimum level. However, this brings out the view that devolution funds are not utilised to communities as expected because some councillors are not fully understanding the working of devolution funds.

The researcher noted that general employees and some directors were not fully involved in the devolution process. The interview responses also resonates with data from respondents from questionnaires on overall comments about devolution funds that there are not patriotic to devolution funds in terms on their responsibilities they expected to serve. As observed by the researcher when the treasurer approached responded that

*“mostly I am not involved and aware of what devolution funds has been utilised for only my duty is release funds to responsible department”*

According to Ncube and Moyo (2022) and Mnangagwa (2018) devolution funds serve projects of the current time on the budget. This implies that to execute an uprising projects to meet immediate demand has to be financed with devolution funds. From the researcher observations found that projects are not succeeding to be implemented because devolution funds are not realised timeously and this poses concerns to the mind of the researcher why the ministry of finance and ministry of local government disbursing funds on the prescribed time. This resonates with the statement which was hinted by the social services director that

*“Failed to complete the construction of schools and community halls projects in 2019&2022 due to late and under disbursement of devolution funds”.*

Above all, on overall findings both quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher noted ignorance of the general public in the sense that are unwilling and ready to corporate with Mutare Rural District Council in supporting the local authority in use of devolution funds. This paved a question during research process that councillors pinpointed that residents or communities are unaware about devolution funds and its purpose expected to serve. The public needs through projects are also being served by devolution funds and the community has to involve in council meetings through consultations whereby they choose projects they expect to done with devolution funds.

#### **4.10 Summary**

From the findings and theoretical literature ,it correlates that service delivery can increase depending on disbursement of funds from the central government to lower tiers .Theoretically pinpointed that devolution funds is a cornerstone of improving local authorities efficiency and effectiveness simultaneously raising the standards living of citizens. On the other hand, according to significant research findings in this study found that delaying in funding local authorities in time and much involvement of central government is affecting proper utilisation of devolution funds. The next chapter focuses on summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

An general overview on the examination use of devolutionary funding in Mutare can be only be attained to its full potential on service delivery if these devolution funds disbursed by central government properly utilised according to its intended purpose. The chapter focuses on those areas that needs attention and amelioration in the council as indicated by the findings in the previous chapter and then provide some recommendations .The conclusions presented in this chapter as well as findings from the data that was collected. There will also be suggestions on how local governments finances.

#### **5.1 Summary of findings**

The research results were as follows

##### **5.1.1 Influence devolution funds on service delivery**

Based on this objective the study found that there is a positive correlation between the allocation of devolution funds and the improvement of public service delivery. Through analysis of respondent feedback, it was determined that there was a significant and positive impact on service delivery for local communities. This was demonstrated by a statistically significant difference between the two variables with a t-value of 10.551 and p-value of 0.01. Respondents provided examples of the projects funded by devolution funds, such as the construction of schools, clinics, and rehabilitation of roads. Overall, the study showed that there is a statistically significant difference between service delivery and devolution funds, indicating a positive impact on public service delivery for local communities. The presentation section of the interview findings provides evidence to support this conclusion. Service delivery is improving and locals are becoming more satisfied with the level of service provided.

### **5.1.2 Key success factors in implementation of devolution funds**

On this objective the study revealed that funds of devolution are utilised in good manner in local authorities because of key measures like strong political will, citizen participation to promote transparency and accountability, strong legal framework and policy guidelines among others. Most of the participants in the study concurred with mentioned factors that were major contributing elements in proper use of devolutions funds. This resonates with earlier studies done by different scholars like Chigwata (2019) and World Bank among others.

### **5.1.3 Challenges in use of devolution funds**

From the findings on objective 3 of the study established that there were many challenges in utilising devolution funds. Most of the respondents indicated the challenges such inadequate fund allocation and delayed fund disbursement, weak governance structures, lack of autonomy in policy making, corruption ,too much interference by central government and directive where to use funds. Most of the respondents revealed the stated challenges are the most in local authorities. This goes in hand with other previous scholars such as Auditor's Report (2019), Hope (2014).

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The study findings indicated that several projects have been or are being financed through devolution funds for the development of Mutare rural district. In this context the study pinpointed that devolution have assisted the council to improve service delivery thus refurbishment of roads, built schools and clinics among other services. The findings of the study demonstrated that the utilisation of devolution funds has resulted in positive outcomes for the community. On the other hand, the existence of several challenges that still affect the allocation of devolution funds suggests that there is a potential for greater impact of the funds than what is currently being experienced. In general, it was established by the study that the rationale of devolution if to improve service delivery, lower the burden of the national government and in the greater image enables infrastructure development at local level.

The study validated that devolution funds as antecedents of improvement in service delivery. Devolution funds had the most significant influence ( $b=0.547$ ).The devolution funds accounted for 62 % variability in service delivery. This is a reflection of its

importance in service provisions by local authorities to residents of district. The research implies to local authorities especially in Zimbabwe, where service provisions are still poor. The local authorities should prioritise other funds such as donations, ZINARA grants, internal revenue sources in service delivery capabilities. The study suggests that local governments should prioritise measuring resident's perceptions of service delivery in order to design services that are centred around the needs and preference of users, resulting in greater satisfaction. Therefore, local authorities should continuously evaluate their service delivery in both organisational and community settings.

The study reveals that there is a lack of direct participation by local communities in the decision-making process regarding the allocation of devolution funds for projects in their respective wards. According to research findings, only 7.5% of communities are involved in the decision-making process, with the justification being that they are represented by their councillors. However, this has led to them feeling excluded from the process and has resulted in a lack of identification with their council. Neither do they own decisions taken by the council. Respondents said the devolution funds were affected by inadequate fund allocation and delay fund disbursement, political and capacity interference, corruption or mismanagement of funds, weak resource base among others. This resonates similar challenges established by Office of Auditor General (2019).

The study concluded that the allocation of devolution funds in local authorities is effective, leading to improved quality of public services. This observation was supported by visual evidence presented in the findings section of the study. In summary, the study found that both the devolution funds and the public service delivery systems are meeting the average expectation. Respondents said the key success factors are strong legal framework and policy guidelines, strong political will among others. Thus service delivery systems of Mutare rural district council are effective.

Apart from that, the study pinpointed that devolution apart from its weakness has its own advantage as greatly benefits the local people. Among the advantages of devolution as established by the study are the fact that devolution uplift livelihoods of the local people funds utilised efficiently and effectively. This comes through with an autonomous local government system which promotes citizen participation in development of agendas, improved service delivery and good governance system.

From quantitative and qualitative view point, this study thus accept the hypothesis that guide the study:

- There is significant relationship between devolution funds and service delivery

### **5.3 Recommendations**

According to the research, the allocation of devolution funds has resulted in a positive impact on the quality of services provided to the residents of Mutare rural district. It has also contributed to the development and economic empowerment of the community in the district. To maintain these benefits, all those involved must collaboratively to ensure the continued effective management of funds and the sustainability of the strategies that have yielded positive results.

Using the conclusions above as point of reference, this study recommends the following:

#### **5.3.1 Citizen participation**

The Zimbabwean constitution (2013) recognises the importance of citizen participation in decision-making processes, and as such, efforts must be made to empower citizens and provide them with awareness of relevant by-laws. Community-based organisations and residents associations can assume vital roles in ensuring citizen empowerment and participation. In order to foster engagement between citizens and devolution agendas, it's essential to create or strengthen platforms that allow for participation. Public awareness and education campaigns are essential to obtain deeper understanding of devolution. Kenya provides a useful model for ensuring citizen participation by setting aside budgets for organizing public consultations and outreach programs, as well as creating feedback mechanisms for citizens to provide their input. Citizen involvement in monitoring and evaluating the performance of devolved entities is crucial to ensuring high-quality service provision.

Training is provided for government officials to allow them to effectively conduct public consultations and provide information to the public that is easily understood. In Pakistan, citizen participation is facilitated through community-based organisations, with an emphasis on gender representation and involvement. Developing citizen engagement manuals and providing capacity building for effective citizen engagement at all levels of government is necessary. Giving citizens the knowledge and skills needed to identify and prioritise community development programs, in line with the constitutional requirements



for devolution, promotes accountability, transparency, and efficient usage of devolution funds.

Additionally, in order to improve public consultations and make information more accessible to the public, government officials require training and capacity building. In Pakistan, citizen involvement is facilitated through the use of community-based organisations. For mobilising civic participation need models that like community based organisations to make sure that citizens desires they are converted into practical plans for each district in Zimbabwe. Also there is need to factor in issue of gender representation and participation on the board of developmental process so that every citizen is taken into action and they help in investor identification and monitoring of provision of service.

Above all, it is crucial to make the community aware of the availability of funds, their intended use, and the projects that they will finance. This will foster greater participation from citizens in each district on the projects financed by the devolution funds.

### **5.3.2 Training of relevant stakeholders**

In order to enhance public service delivery, it is recommended that local authorities provide continued training to their employees in the areas of service provision and customer care. By improving the quality of services offered to the public, local authorities can build a better reputation with residents and increase their level of satisfaction.

To improve the provision of services and customer care, local authorities should prioritise continual training of their employees, allowing for an enhancement of effective service delivery that can positively reflect on the organisation and appeal to residents. Furthermore, it is crucial that adequate training on project selection and management be provided to both the staff of the funds and representatives from the community.

### **5.3.3 Limit central government supervision**

The central government should diminish its interference in local authorities' financial operations to greater policy matters and let local authorities to manage day to day administrative work with least amount of supervision. For these local governments circumstances of poor administration can only be avoided by close watching.

On the other hand, there were some restrictions to the study. The approach used in the study was both quantitative and qualitative, aimed at measuring the effect of devolution funds on service delivery. To improve the outcomes of future studies, they could incorporate

qualitative methods to garner in depths perceptions of the community towards devolution funds' In addition, members of this study were employees and councillors, conversely, to have a holistic approach of success of devolution process, future studies may incorporate ,ministry of local government and public works (MLGPW),provincial ministers (PM), provincial development coordinator (PDC) (who involved in devolved governance structures) and district development coordinator who presides councils meetings on devolution. The research model was able to account 62% of the differences observed in service delivery. To improve its accuracy in predicting outcomes, future studies could include additional factors in extended models that are known to impact service delivery.

#### **5.4 Area for further research**

It also crucial to conduct more on the topic of “Influence of institutional strengthening and governance structures on devolutions funds in local governments” because of its benefits in Zimbabwe both rural and urban areas.

#### **5.5 Summary**

The main emphasis of this chapter was on providing a summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations of research under study. Above all, it also articulates areas for future research

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## **APPENDIX I**

### **BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**



Faculty of Commerce

Department of Banking and Finance

P.Bag 1020, Off Trojan Road

Bindura

20 February 2023



The CEO

Mutare Rural District Council

Box 604, Corner 'C' Avenue

Riverside Road

Mutare

Dear Sir

**RE: REQUESTING PERMISSION TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA FROM  
YOUR ORGANISATION**

I was once a student on attachment at Mutare RDC, in the finance department from 04 August 2021 to August 2022. I am in my final year at Bindura University of Science Education currently carrying out a research entitled “**impact of devolution funds on service delivery in local authorities**”. The research is carried out in partial fulfilment of the Bachelor of Business Studies in Banking and Finance, the researcher is currently undertaking

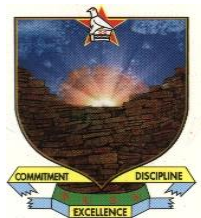
May you kindly grant me permission to collect research data from your organisation. The data sought is solely for academic purposes. I hope this will receive your uttermost and convenient regards. Your cooperation and assistance is greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Emmanuel Marimba

(Student B193432B).

## APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE



Dear sir/madam


### **RE: REQUEST FOR THE RESPONSES ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

My name is Emmanuel Marimba, a student at Bindura University of Science Education doing a Bachelor of Business Studies (Honour) Degree in Banking and Finance. I am currently undertaking a research entitled “**An analysis on the impact of devolution funds on service delivery in local authorities**”

This is being done in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree programme. The research is entirely academic and any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality

Yours contributions would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you

  
For Quality Service Provision & Development

All Communications to be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer

**MUTARE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

<b>HEAD OFFICE</b> Cnr. 'C' Avenue & Riverside Drive P O Box 604 <b>MUTARE</b> Tel: 020 - 61587/64737 Fax : 020 69125 admin@mutarerdc.org	<b>SUBOFFICE</b> Box 958 Zimunya Township <b>MUTARE</b>
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Workshop

REF: XC/157/13

2 March 2023

Emmanuel Marimba  
Bindura University of Science Education

Dear Sir/ Madam


**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRYOUT RESEARCH PROJECT IN MUTARE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Reference is made to your letter seeking authority to carryout a research in our Council on 'Impact of Devolution Funds on service delivery in Local Authorities'

We hereby grant you permission to undertake your research in our District under the following conditions:

1. You shall abide by the requirements of the Official Secrecy Act during the course of your research.
2. Information gathered shall be used for academic purposes only.
3. You shall avail a copy of your research to Council upon completion.

Yours faithfully

  
**S.D CHINARA**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

I Emmanuel Marimba, student number B193432B do accept to carry out my research in Mutare District under the above conditions.

Signed : ..... Date: .....  
(Emmanuel Marimba)

Cell: 0786 915 802

**MUTARE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

13 MAR 2023

P.O. BOX 604, MUTARE  
TEL: 020 20 61587 / 64737  
EMAIL: rdcmutare@gmail.com

**THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE IS ADMINISTERED TO MUTARE  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL EMPLOYEES.**

**SECTION A**

Please tick in the appropriate box that matches your answer.

**1. Gender**

Male	
Female	

**2. Marital status**

Single	
Married	
divorced	
widowed	

**3. Age**

Below 20yrs	
20- 30yrs	
30- 40yrs	
40-50yrs	

Above 50yrs	
-------------	--

#### 4. Education

Below O'level	
O'level	
Diploma or certificate	
Degree	
Post graduate	

#### 5. For how long have you worked at council?

Less than 2 years	
3-6 years	
7-10 years	
11-14 years	
15 years and above	

#### 6. What is frequency service delivery to local citizens?

Once per week	
Twice a week	
Once per week	
Twice a month	

Less often	
------------	--

**7. In my understanding, devolution has....?**

(strongly agree 5, agree 4, neutral 3, strongly disagree 2 and disagree 1)

	5	4	3	2	1
make service delivery better and faster					
enhanced access to service delivery such as health, education, roads, water and sanitation in terms of availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability					
minimise instances that can disrupt council service delivery					
Others (specify)					

**SECTION B**

**8. PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING**

(strongly agree 5, agree 4, neutral 3, strongly disagree 2 and disagree 1)

	5	4	3	2	1
1.Devolution funds has enhanced access to public services,equipment and facilities at the Mutare Rural District Council					
2. Devolution funds received is sufficient to help in delivery of quality council services					
3. Devolution funds has influenced on rehabilitation and improvement of Mutare Rural District Council					

**SECTION C**

**Please rate the key success factors that has inspired you in implementation of devolution funds on local authorities**

(strongly agree 5, agree 4, neutral 3, strongly disagree 2 and disagree 1)

	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
1.adequate human and financial resources					
2. strong legal framework and policy guidelines					
3. citizen participation to foster transparency and accountability					
4. strong political will					

**SECTION D**

**11. Challenges in use of devolution funds on service delivery is influenced by:**

(strongly agree 5, agree 4, neutral 3, strongly disagree 2 and disagree 1)

	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
1.inadequate fund allocations and delayed fund disbursements					
2. corruption/mismanagement of funds					
3. lack of devolution management					
4. capacity and political inferences					
5. weak governance systems					

6. weak communication and financial management systems					
7. weak resource base					

**12. Your overall comment on devolution**

**funds**.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**THANK YOU**



## **APPENDIX II INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### **Interview Guide for Mutare Rural District Management**

Researcher of this project is **Emmanuel Marimba B193432B**. I am carrying out this interview for academic purposes as a partial fulfilment for the requirements of under Graduate Degree in Banking and Finance Studies awarded by Bindura University of Science Education

The title of the study reads: **Impact of Devolution Funds on service delivery by local authorities, a case study of Mutare Rural District Council**. Anything you say will be regarded as confidential. There are no right or wrong answers.

The interview questions are group according to the main research questions written in bold.

#### **To what extent are devolution funds affect service delivery?**

1. What do you understand by the term devolution funds?
2. Do you think devolution funds will improve service provision to communities' welfare?

#### **What are key success factors affect the implementation of devolution funds**

3. Identify the projects and measures that were put in place in proper utilisation of devolution funds
4. What are the benefits that were brought by key success factors in use of devolution funds in improving service delivery in Mutare Rural?

#### **What are the challenges in use of devolution funds?**

5. What are the problems faced in utilisation of devolution funds?
6. What are the weaknesses of devolution funds?

**THANK YOU**

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